

I claim:

1. A device for improving a user's flexibility, said device comprising:

5           an extendable rod having an upper end and a lower end, said rod including first and second rod sections that are displaceable relative to one another to change the length of said device, said first and second rod sections being lockable relative to one another to fix said rod at a desired length; and

10           a handle positioned at said upper end of said rod to be capable of being gripped by a user, said handle being tapered, at least over a portion of said handle, increasing in thickness in a direction away from said upper end toward said lower end.

15           2. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said first rod section has a hollow section, and said second rod section is configured for telescopic displacement within said hollow section.

20           3. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said device includes indicia located thereon, said indicia indicating a length of the device.

25           4. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said device includes indicia located thereon, said indicia including instructions for the use of the device for purposes of stretching.

5. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said first and second sections of said rod are cylindrical.

30           6. A device in accordance with claim 1 further comprising indicia on said second section of said rod, said indicia cooperating with said first section of said rod to indicate the length of said device.

7. A device in accordance with claim 4 wherein said indicia includes illustrations showing a person using the device.

5       8. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said rod is extendable to a length of at least six feet.

10      9. A device in accordance with claim 6 wherein said indicia comprises markings calibrated to indicate a length such as inches or centimeters.

10      10. An exercise and stretching device comprising:

an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end, said rod having a length of at least five feet; and

15      a handle positioned on said rod at said upper end and which is configured to be grippable by a user.

20      11. A device in accordance with claim 10 further comprising indicia located on said rod, said indicia including at least one of the following - a) instructions for use of the device and b) markings to indicate length of the device.

12. A device in accordance with claim 10 wherein said elongated rod includes at least two sections that are displaceable relative to one another to alter the length of said device, said rod further being lockable at a desired length.

25      13. A device in accordance with claim 11 having a lock for locking said at least two sections together, said lock comprising a collet attached to one of said sections which is expandable to engage an inside of the other of said sections to thereby lock said two sections at the desired length.

30

14. A device in accordance with claim 12 wherein one of said sections includes instructions for use of the device and the other of said sections includes markings to indicate length of the device.

5           15. A device in accordance with claim 10 wherein said rod has a length of at least six feet.

16. An exercise and stretching device comprising:

10           an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end; and

15           a handle positioned on said rod at said upper end and which is configured to be gripped by the user, at least a portion of said handle being tapered in a direction so as to increase in thickness toward said lower end of said rod.

17. A device in accordance with claim 16 wherein said rod has a length of at least five feet.

20           18. A method for improving a golf swing using an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end, said method comprising a user of the rod doing the following:

25           (a) placing said lower end of said rod on the ground in front of the user;

              (b) gripping said rod with both hands;

              (c) assuming the approximate position for addressing the ball; and

30           (e) moving the user's arms to the back-swing position while maintaining said grip and keeping said lower end of said rod on the ground.

19. The method of claim 18 further comprising:

(f) moving the user's arms to the finish-swing position while keeping said lower end of said rod member on the ground.

5 20. The method of claim 19 wherein step (f) is carried out after step (e).

21. The method of claim 18 further comprising:

(f) while holding the back-swing position of step (e), drawing the lower end of said rod progressively towards the foot on the back-swing side of the user's body.

10

22. The method of claim 18 wherein step (b) comprises gripping said rod at a height above said user's head during.

15 23. The method of claim 22 wherein said rod member is gripped at a position at least one inch above said user's head.

24. The method of claim 18 wherein:

step (c) includes said user standing up straight with feet approximately shoulder width apart and knees slightly flexed; and  
said arms are held straight out in front.

20

25. The method of claim 18 further comprising the following:

(f) while holding the back-swing position of step (e), dropping towards a sitting position.

25

26. The method of claim 18 wherein step (b) comprises right handed users gripping said rod with their right hand above the left hand, and left handed users gripping said rod with their left hand above the right hand.

30

27. The method of claim 18 wherein step (e) comprises keeping said left arm straight during the back-swing motion as the arm moves toward the right side of the user where the user is right handed, or keeping said right arm straight during the back-swing motion as the arm moves towards the left side of the user where the user  
5 is left handed.

28. A method for stretching using an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end, said method comprising the user doing the following:

10 (a) placing said lower end of said rod on the ground in front of the user;

(b) standing up straight with feet apart;

(c) gripping said rod with both hands at about chest height or higher; and

15 (e) moving the user's arms to a back-swing position while maintaining said grip and keeping said lower end of said rod member on the ground.

29. The method of claim 28 further comprising:

20 (f) moving the user's arms to the finish-swing position while keeping said lower end of said rod member on the ground.

30. The method of claim 28 wherein step (e) comprises keeping said left arm straight during the back-swing motion as the arm moves toward the right side of the user where the user is right handed, or keeping said right arm straight during the back-swing motion as the arm moves towards the left side of the user where the user  
25 is left handed.

31. A method for stretching neck muscles using an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end, said method comprising the user doing the following:

(a) standing up straight with feet about shoulder width apart;

(b) placing said rod on one side of the user approximately in line with the user's shoulder;

5

(c) placing the user's arm that is opposite said one side on the user's hip;

(d) gripping said rod at about shoulder height with the user's hand located on the arm on said one side;

10

(e) straightening said arm that is gripping said rod; and

(f) tilting the user's head towards the side away from said rod.

15 32. A method for stretching back muscles using an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end, said method comprising the user doing the following:

(a) standing up straight with feet about shoulder width apart;

20 (b) holding said rod with both hands at about chest height arm's length away with said lower end of said rod on the ground;

. (c) bending from the waste and placing the user's head between the arms;  
and

25

(d) moving to a sitting position.

30 33. A method for stretching arm muscles using an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end, said method comprising the user doing the following:

(a) standing up straight with feet about shoulder width apart;

5 (b) placing said rod in one hand at least at shoulder height, and said lower end placed in front of the user's foot on the same side of the user's body as said one hand;

(c) placing the other hand on the user's hip; and

10 (d) rotating said arm that is holding said rod to a position behind the user.

34. A method for stretching muscles using an elongated rod having an upper end and a lower end, said method comprising the user doing the following:

15 (a) standing up straight with feet about shoulder width apart;

(b) gripping the rod with one hand at about chest height or higher;

20 (c) placing said lower end of the rod on the ground in front of the foot on the same side of the user's body as said one hand;

(d) extending straight the user's arm having the one hand;

25 (e) swinging said arm of said one hand across the user's body to the opposite side of the user's body;

(f) placing the other hand palm down on the rod about waist height; and

(g) pulling back on said rod with said other hand.